

**ADOT presents I-17 alternatives**  
***Further public input sought***

Camp Verde Bugle  
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By Brandon Wilson  
Staff Reporter

VVN/Brandon Wilson: ADOT Planner Dale Buskirk (center) discusses the I-17 Alternatives Study with Camp Verde Mayor Tony Gioia (right-front) and other attendees at Thursday night's presentation. Arizona Department of Transportation officials gave the first of four statewide presentations Thursday in Camp Verde regarding potential alternatives to Interstate 17.

"This is the preliminary stage of a very long and involved process," ADOT Planner Dale Buskirk said.

The I-17 Alternatives Study is to examine whether alternative routes are feasible in attempts to improve reliability to the existing roadway that connects Phoenix with Northern Arizona.

Numerous potential corridor alternatives were presented, including routes heading north from Phoenix's Loop 101 running alongside the existing interstate. Possible roadways branching off from I-17 in Central Arizona heading east to Winona off Interstate 40, and to Seligman in the west, also off I-40. There were also alternatives branching off I-17 heading to Williams and Ash Fork < and a number of other alternatives ranging from these lengthy proposals to short connector routes throughout the state.

The various alternatives represent "very preliminary ideas that the study team has generated while brainstorming," according to a handout from ADOT. They are "just to provide a discussion starter."

Department officials stressed the importance of public input at this stage of the study.

Kristin Darr-Bornstein with Kristen Darr and Associates, ADOT's communication partner for the study, said all comments will be evaluated to find common themes and a general direction the public would like to see ADOT going in.

Following the brief presentation, ADOT and KDA officials dispersed throughout the conference room to field questions from attendees.

District 1 State Sen. Tom O'Halleran (R-Sedona), Camp Verde Mayor Tony Gioia, Yavapai County Board of Supervisors Chairman Chip Davis, Phoenix Cement Communications Director Margie Beach, Clarkdale Councilman Curt Bohall, other public officials and many Verde Valley residents were present.

Gioia discussed with Buskirk the difficulty in creating one of the alternatives due to the topography in that particular area. He also used the time to talk to the ADOT official about his gripes with Arizona 260.

Some asked about environmental issues involved in creating some of the alternatives. Buskirk said topography and environmental impacts are strongly taken into consideration.

Others expressed concerns as to why it takes "so long to get accidents cleared on I-17."

Buskirk said many of the suggestions are good points and exactly the kind of input sought by the department.

Those interested in commenting on the I-17 Alternatives Study should submit written comments to ADOT I-17 Alternate Study c/o KDA 4545 E. Shea Blvd., Suite 108 Phoenix AZ 85021, e-mail [kristin@kdacreative.com](mailto:kristin@kdacreative.com) or go to <http://tpd.azdot.gov/planning/i17alternatives.php> to complete an online form. Comments should be received by June 20.

Proposed schedule for I-17 alternatives

Following the environmental scan, looking at cost estimates, holding public meetings and further evaluation, ADOT will prepare a report and recommendation. That report is scheduled for the end of March 2008.

Following the submitted report, if the need for an alternative (or alternatives) to I-17 is recognized, ADOT will enter into another round of planning and environmental studies, then into design and construction.

Three other meetings regarding the I-17 Alternatives Study will be June 4 in Flagstaff at South Beaver Elementary School, June 5 at Glassford Hill Middle School in Prescott Valley and June 6 at Boulder Creek High School in Anthem. All meetings will be from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.



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